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LETTER DATED 5 OCTOBER 1992 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF EGYPT, THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, PAKISTAN, SAUDI ARABIA, SENEGAL AND TURKEY ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

We are addressing this letter to you as members of the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The Contact Group, representing the 47 States members of OIC, is mandated by the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers to follow up the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to keep developments in the former Yugoslavia under review.

As winter approaches a great tragedy awaits the already suffering people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Vulnerable segments of the population, consisting of children, the elderly and the ill, are at special risk due to lack of adequate food, shelter and medical facilities. The international community is unable to deliver sufficient humanitarian assistance to the victims. The situation is made worse by the continued aggression of the Serbian elements who, through artillery and air attacks on civilian targets, continue to violate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and the basic norms of civilized behaviour. "Ethnic cleansing", an affront to humanity, continues without let-up. The principal victims of these atrocities are the Muslims whose very existence in their ancestral lands is being threatened.

We had nourished the hope that, following the London Conference, effective action would be taken to put an end to the brutal Serbian attacks and that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina would find some relief. These hopes have been dashed. We are now facing a situation where perhaps one tenth of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina will perish as a result of starvation, exposure and disease. We regret that attempts to bring to an end the suffering of the Bosnian people have so far failed. The critical moment has come when the international community can no longer put off shouldering its responsibilities.

Given this grim situation, the Contact Group of OIC has decided to call for an immediate meeting of the Security Council to consider taking the following urgent action.

(a) Although a considerable amount of time has elapsed since the Security Council adopted resolution 770 (1992), the military elements of those countries prepared to participate in the expansion of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina have yet to be deployed. The unhindered delivery of humanitarian relief to all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the population of Sarajevo, should get under way immediately. To this end, safe corridors have to be established and effective measures must be taken to stop anyone from hindering the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

(b) At the London Conference, agreement was reached on the establishment of a "no-fly zone" as a confidence-building measure. The Security Council should take appropriate measures to prevent the air attacks by the Serbian side against targets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to ensure the safety of humanitarian flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The effective enforcement of these measures is a necessity given the consistent disregard by the Serbian side of its commitments as well as of Security Council resolutions;

(c) Steps should be taken to bring before an international tribunal those responsible for the abhorrent practice of "ethnic cleansing", for mass killings and the commission of other grave breaches of international humanitarian law and in particular the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. Emphasis should be given to holding accountable those who are in a position to order the commission of these crimes against humanity. The States members of OIC are prepared to support all measures that can be taken to this end within the Security Council or in conjunction with other United Nations bodies.

We would be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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